

Meeting Minutes

Media and Communications Committee

Location: Fire Conference Room

3:00 p.m., Monday, June 18, 2007

1. **Welcome and Introduction.** Chairwoman Leslie Daigle convened the meeting at 3:00 p.m. The following persons were in attendance:

Committee members

- Council Member Leslie Daigle (Chair)
- Council Member Keith Curry
- Council Member Nancy Gardner
- Don Boortz

Committee member absent

- Dan Wampole

City Staff

- Homer Bludau, City Manager
- Dave Kiff, Assistant City Manager
- Marilee Jackson, PIO
- Iris Lee, Associate Civil Engineer
- Janet Brown, Assistant Planner
- Kim Rieff, Department Assistant

Consultant

- Bill Marticorena
- Jonathan Kramer
- Beth Beeman, Director of Public Affairs IRWD

Members of the public

- Rhonda Nobel
- Chris Sullivan

2. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

- The minutes from the Media and Communications Meetings of July 26, 2006, February 12, 2007, and March 19, 2007, were approved after corrections.

3. **New Business**

A. Communications Strategies/Options

- **Roundtable with Beth Beeman, Director of Public Affairs at IRWD**

Chairwoman Daigle said Ms. Beeman from the Irvine Ranch Water District is here to help guide a discussion regarding hiring a Public Information Officer for the City. Mr. Kiff handed out a draft job description and a reference to the General Plan.

Ms. Beeman said she envisioned the City hiring a communications person to put out messages and coordinating with the public. Mr. Kiff said this person should be more strategic, behind-the-scenes versus an official spokes person for the City.

Mr. Kiff asked what she thinks the City should be looking for. She suggested the following qualities:

- quick learner;
- able to work outside their element;
- coordinate with other departments regarding the community;
- a good team manager;
- understands how the government works;
- willing to state their opinion;
- constantly thinking of ways to promote the City;
- a good speaker;
- analytical skills;
- able to work with all levels of the organization;

Ms. Beeman said one thing not on the draft job description is providing support to different departments regarding presentations they are making, media calls, and message points.

Chairwoman Daigle asked Ms. Beeman if she has any suggestions on how the City might get organized. Ms. Beeman said that the City does a good job at that with the City channels and the website.

- **Direction to City staff regarding Communications**

Council Member Gardner said she would like to see incorporated into the job description some of the aspects that Ms. Beeman mentioned, the qualities the committee would look for and also review the Target Activities Priority List handed out by Ms. Beeman.

Mr. Bludau asked if the desire is to bring it back to this committee or to the City Council. Chairwoman Daigle replied in the next week or so there will be a budget item for the position and then Mr. Kiff could email a draft for review.

Council Member Curry said we can get some feedback and move ahead to the City Council.

4. Old Business

A. Wi-Fi. Update on discussions with Metro-Fi regarding citywide wi-fi system. If available, consultant will join us to discuss wi-fi safety issues raised in past meetings. Chairwoman Daigle introduced Mr. Kramer. He is an expert in Wi-Fi field communications, an RF engineer, and an attorney with a lot of experience representing municipalities. She said this committee is trying to work through a couple of issues with Wi-Fi. One is the standards that govern the omissions from health. We have had a round of interviews on the technology. The expectations are high and we are having trouble choosing a good performer. We don't know what economic model to look at. We had questions about the technology with Wi-Max. She asked Mr. Kramer to share with the

committee the health issues, the standards and also his sense of where other cities are with Wi-Fi and some of the challenges.

Mr. Kramer talked about his experience in cable communication issues. He has worked here at the city as an RF Engineer doing project reviews to deal with the RF health issues to determine whether the projects meet the Federal Standards. The United States Congress has delegated the authority to set National Standards to the FCC. The Federal Government allows us at the local level determine compliance with the Federal Standards as a condition for issuing permits. He talked about applying the correct standards and rules. The rules are also based the amount of time of exposure to radio frequency. The type of transmissions at these frequencies are Wi-Fi, Cellular, and PCS. They are non-ionizing emissions. Most of our engineers don't like to use the word "radiation" although it is technically correct. He has talked to a number of health physicists who sat on the standards setting committee and consistently said that the 100% level of exposure is actually 2% of a level where you could actually observe a change in the cell. That does not mean cancer, it just means that you can measure some change in the cell.

Mr. Kiff said it is still the cities' discretion at this point as to whether or not to implement a Wi-Fi system city-wide and that is one of Ms. Sullivan's concerns. We are doing it voluntarily and have concerns in terms of health affects.

Council Member Curry asked if there is any scientific evidence that suggests having Wi-Fi in a city-wide application is hazardous to the health of the citizens of that community. Mr. Kramer said hazard is determined by compliance of the Federal standards. He's evaluated Wi-Fi in large and small projects and the projects have complied so it's not a health issue.

Chairwoman Daigle asked Mr. Kramer to discuss the economics and technology issues cities are faced with. He responded he has only experienced one as an observer. He said cities of any size haven't figured out how to do this other than giving it away and absorbing the cost.

Council Member Curry asked if the City became Wi-Fi accessible the suggestion would be to wait until Time Warner and Cox are prepared to deploy. Mr. Kramer suggested talking to both companies and for partnership opportunities or areas they don't intend to cover where the City might want to provide additional fill coverage in. The City could shift the burden of the cost and maintenance of the deployment to someone else and work a process that can provide a certain level of service to the residences.

Chairwoman Daigle asked how service is provided at the beaches. Mr. Kramer said the economics of it would require a level of commitment and support from the City that will be on-going. Mr. Kramer said he's seen a long-term kiosk in Santa Monica.

In response to Chairwoman Daigle, Mr. Marticorena suggested the committee contact someone from Time Warner and have them do a presentation.

In response to Council Member Curry, Mr. Kiff said he met with Metro-Fi two weeks ago and they are now in the process of presenting an economic model to the Committee

that works for the City in terms of speed and cost, and for them in terms of their proposal to offer it community-wide. It should happen in the next three or four weeks. Mr. Marticorena said the concern he has is the length of term because of the long-term commitment. Mr. Kiff said the model is five years with two five year options so either party can cancel at the end of the five years.

Ms. Sullivan said some concerns she has is security issues and privacy rights. Mr. Kramer said regarding the privacy issue there is not an issue because radio transmissions are controlled by the Federal Government and they permit it.

5. Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items

None

6. Items for Next Agenda

Chairwoman Daigle said the items for the next agenda are Metro-Fi refining their proposal, a job description, and a Time Warner presentation

7. Adjourn & Set Next Meeting Date

The meeting was adjourned at 4:25 p.m.